

**English and translingual  
adolescent identities in Greece**

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of the requirements for the degree of  
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## **Certificate of Authorship/Originality**

I certify that this thesis has not previously been submitted for any degree, nor is it being submitted as part of a candidature for any other degree.

I also certify that the thesis has been written by me, and that any help received in preparing this work, and all sources used, have been acknowledged in the thesis.

Signature of Candidate

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Maria Harissi', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

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Maria Harissi

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## Synopsis

This thesis is concerned with rethinking English and identity among adolescents in contemporary Greece. As the ‘default’ foreign language in Greece, English has been discursively produced within educational and social milieus in paradoxical ways. On the one hand, it is seen as an instrumental tool, a neutral pragmatic language essential for learners’ future socioeconomic success. On the other hand, it is discussed as a detrimental influence in that it is seen as a threat to ‘Greek’ language and identity.

Setting aside this rhetoric, the thesis offers a counter-narrative that opens up the issue of local engagement with English in Greece. Drawing on poststructuralist understandings of language and identity, on the notion of performance as well as on performativity theory, the study examines the manifold, unpredictable ways in which English becomes seamlessly integrated into Greek and playfully and idiosyncratically reconstituted locally among adolescents to create a plethora of identity effects.

The research takes an ethnographic approach comprised of participant observations and interviews with four groups of adolescents in Ioannina, Greece. It adopts a research perspective that combines an interpretive theoretical framework with poststructuralist research epistemologies and demonstrates the usefulness of such a dual paradigm for a project that seeks at once to interpret adolescents’ linguistic practices with English and to deconstruct the very category of ‘English.’ The analytic stance mobilises detailed textual analysis and poststructuralist discourse theory, thus making it possible to investigate the micro, while interrogating the macro and the political.

On the basis of this analysis and without losing sight of the cultural politics of English, the thesis argues for an understanding of this global language in Greece as linguistic praxis, as performative, as giving rise to translingual identity experiences. This new perspective may lead to a reconceptualisation of English language pedagogy in Greece which might involve an increasing engagement with learners’ distinctive ways of speaking and ‘being in and through’ their compulsory ‘foreign’ tongue.

## Notes on Notations

1. In line with two of the central themes that emerged in this thesis, namely, language play and linguistic hybridity, I have wanted to ‘play’ with the naming of my thesis chapters. I have thus assigned titles for my chapters that may be characterised as ‘Greek in English’ or ‘English from Greek’ words whose ending is the same (i.e. -is) and whose meanings can be seen as informed by both the Greek and English linguacultures. The titles of the Abstract and of Chapters 1 to 4 are process-orientated titles: **Synopsis**: summarises. **Etiologisis**: gives the reason for the research. **Skepsis**: interrogates ‘facts’ and ‘realities.’ **Exegesis**: critically interprets previous research and theoretical frameworks. **Photographisis**: frames the research as more than passive observing. The titles of Chapters 5 to 7 point to the kinds of language practices that emerged in each chapter: **Poiesis**: the making, the creation or transformation of meaning. **Mimesis**: the imitation of text. **Osmosis**: the hybridisation of text. The title of Chapter 8 points to one of the main thesis arguments: **Praxis**: language use as linguistic praxis.
2. I have changed some identifying details and the names of participants and of individuals mentioned in the course of the research.
3. I have transcribed the thesis data according to the transcription conventions provided in the following page. These draw on different sources and do not align to an established research standard in conversation analysis (CA). Greek text is transcribed in Greek alphabet.
4. I have occasionally provided phonemic transcriptions of certain Greek words or phrases that appear in the thesis data following the transliteration conventions provided in Appendix 9. I have transliterated all other Greek terms (in particular individuals’ names and titles) inconsistently either according to the conventions provided in Appendix 9 or according to commonly encountered transcriptions (e.g. ‘Polytechnion’ instead of ‘Politechnio’ or ‘Mercouri’ instead of ‘Merkouri’). Word stress is not represented by any diacritical mark in these transcriptions.
5. I have occasionally provided hints to the pronunciation of certain English or hybridised (i.e. mixed English and Greek) items that appear in the data following common phonetic symbols.
6. From time to time, I have placed certain terms in scare-quotes to signal ‘contested term.’
7. References to works in Greek appear in the reference list both in Greek and translated into English by myself. References to Greek web pages and FEK /Fillo Efimeridas Kiverniseos/ [Government Gazette Issue] appear only translated into English by myself.
8. Where possible, I have deliberately included authors and editors’ first names in my reference list so that I keep in line with my contention that a person’s name constitutes one of the basic aspects of a person’s identity.
9. American English spelling conventions have not been changed in exact quotes.

## Transcription Conventions

·	Stopping fall in intonation followed by a noticeable pause as at the end of a declarative sentence
?	Rising pitch/intonation followed by a noticeable pause as at the end of an interrogative sentence
!	Animated tone; not necessarily a grammatical exclamation
/	Slight fall indicating that more is to come
:::	Lengthened segments/an extension of the sound or syllable
wor-	A glottal stop, a cut-off sound
,	Prodelision (i.e. the deletion of an initial vowel) at the beginning of a word; elision (i.e. the deletion of a final vowel) at the end of a word
/word/	Uncertain transcription or uncertain interlocutor
/?/	Inaudible utterance
(...)	Text omitted
(pause)	Pause or pause duration in seconds
(word)	Additions referring to grammatical information or additions used to facilitate intelligibility due to grammatical differences between Greek and English
“word”	Quoted speech
[ ]	Bounds overlapping speech
CAPS	Emphatic stress
<b>Bold</b>	English or hybridised English text
((word))	Supplementary information

### Notes:

1. I have transcribed utterances horizontally to represent their relative arrangement in time.
2. I have line-numbered interactional and online chat data transcripts.
3. I have indented interview data transcripts.
4. Quotations from all data transcripts are *italicised* in text.
5. The Greek data transcripts have been translated into English by myself.
6. I have used [brackets] for my English translations of the Greek data transcripts.
7. Occasionally I have used **bold** for text in French, German or Italian.
8. I have used the phrase ‘Greek-sounding pronunciation of English’ to signal a way of pronouncing English using the Greek articulatory frame.
9. I have used the phrase ‘English-sounding pronunciation of English’ to signal a way of pronouncing English that is marked by a distinct attempt to approximate a non-Greek, English-like accent, not necessarily identifiable as British or American English.
10. I have used the phrase ‘American-sounding pronunciation of English’ to signal a way of pronouncing English approximating an American-like accent.
11. The different ways of pronouncing English are also often characterised (e.g. ironic/caricatured English-sounding pronunciation). In cases where the phrase ‘English-sounding pronunciation of English’ is characterised as ‘natural’ or ‘spontaneous,’ the implication (cf. note 9 above) of a distinct attempt not to sound Greek may not be there.